

## NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

**HON. RON KLINK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate several constituents from my district for their participation in National History Day.

National History Day inspires students to learn and think critically about people, places and events that have shaped history. Every year National History Day selects a theme. For the 1996–97 school year their theme was "Triumph & Tragedy in History."

Those who participated in this contest competed against fellow students at the district, State and national levels, presenting what they learned with creative and original performances, media presentations, papers, or three-dimensional projects. Encouraged to understand and comprehend the full historical importance of their topics, students then asked insightful questions about when and why the event they had researched occurred, what it's subsequent historical significance.

In a day and age when far too many of our Nation's youth seem to be ignorant of our rich heritage, it is encouraging to see how the students involved in the National History Day contest took an active interest in remembering the events of the past.

I would especially like to congratulate my constituents, Dean Walker, Dana Frishkorn, Jonathan Patrick, Jonathan Wise, Alexis Bohan, and their teachers, Dale Wagner, and Diane McAfee, for their outstanding achievements in this year's National History Day competition.

They are a credit to education in Pennsylvania and an inspiration to all of the students in the Fourth Congressional of Pennsylvania. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing their exceptional work.

## THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1997

**HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. GEPHARDT. Mr. Speaker, just this past weekend the President gave a commencement address in San Diego, CA, in which he announced the beginning of his race initiative that over the next year will seek to engage the American people in an honest and open dialog on race relations. Through this initiative, the President has set a goal of focusing national attention on lessening the barriers that divide our nation along racial lines and developing concrete policy solutions that will unite us as one America. I commend the President and his advisory panel, chaired by the distinguished scholar Dr. John Hope Franklin, as they begin a journey, that if successful, will bring us closer to realizing our fullest potential as a nation. It is a journey on which I hope they will be joined by all of the American people.

But unlike the President who has chosen to lead us down a path toward racial reconciliation, today, once again Republicans in Congress have chosen to take the hackneyed and politically expedient path of exploiting racial di-

vision by reintroducing legislation that seeks to erase the gains that many women and minorities have made toward achieving equal opportunity. Today, Representative CANADY and Senator MCCONNELL introduce what they call the "Civil Rights Act of 1997," a bill that would abolish affirmative action in Federal Government employment and contracting.

Those who support the Canady-McConnell bill claim that affirmative action is unfair because it uses "quotas" and gives "preferences" to undeserving and unqualified women and minorities. But they could not be further from the truth. The majority of American people support affirmative action because they know that it is a moderate and effective remedy for providing equal opportunity to those who have historically been treated unfairly. Affirmative action, like other Federal civil rights laws, is a bipartisan solution that has enjoyed the support of Democratic and Republican Presidents, Democratic and Republican Members of Congress, and continues to have the support of Republican Governors like Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey, Jim Edgar of Illinois, Bill Weld of Massachusetts, Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania, and others including Retired Gen. Colin Powell.

We as a Congress must reject the path of racial divisiveness represented by the Canady-McConnell bill and chart our own path that will complement the efforts of the President's race initiative. As we begin the appropriations process, let us provide the funding necessary to the agencies of the Federal Government that enforce our antidiscrimination laws. This is an action that we must take to demonstrate our continued commitment to the full enforcement of these laws.

If we are to realize the potential of our democracy, then the choice is clear. We must continue to open the doors of opportunity in the classroom and the workplace to all our citizens and come to fully appreciate that the growing diversity of our great Nation is truly our greatest resource. Let us heal the wounds of race, not reopen them. Let us not abandon affirmative action.

IN HONOR OF WESTERN QUEENS  
GAZETTE 15TH ANNIVERSARY**HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, one of the pleasures of serving in this legislative body is the opportunity we occasionally get to acknowledge publicly the outstanding pillars of our communities.

I rise today to pay tribute to the Western Queens Gazette on the occasion of its 15th anniversary by placing their name in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The Western Queens Gazette has served as a vehicle to inform and educate the residents of the Queens community for 15 years. I would like to take this opportunity to commend its publisher and founder, Mr. Tony Barsamian, for his initiative and insight in starting and maintaining this paper for so many years. During these times when news seems more focus on highlighting the negative events taking place in our society, it is good to know that individuals, like Mr. Barsamian,

still believe there is something useful to delivering good news and relevant information to his friends and neighbors.

The healthy sense of community that exist in that neighborhood today, I believe, can easily be attributed to the Western Queens Gazette. Mr. Barsamian has done a tremendous job at delivering the good news to Queens. Highlighting the good works of the Queens community is good business and the best type of service to provide.

Thank you Western Queens Gazette and Mr. Barsamian for your years of dedicated service to improving public opinion. I ask my colleagues today to join me in saluting this fine citizen and the institution he has built.

## TRIBUTE TO RUTH BLOCK

**HON. BRAD SHERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ruth Block, an exemplary individual who has selflessly devoted herself to the community and tirelessly sought to foster an ecumenical climate of understanding. Ruth in being honored by the American Jewish Committee with its 1997 Community Service Award and I would like to add my accolades for this outstanding citizen.

The Talmud states that "Charity knows neither race nor creed," and Ruth's devotion to working on behalf of the entire community illustrates that service to others also recognizes no such boundaries. Ruth Block's accomplishments are truly remarkable and these brief remarks can hardly hope to fully acknowledge all that she has done for the community.

Ruth Block has selflessly devoted her time and energy to numerous causes, including the Rockefeller Foundation, the League of Women Voters and has been an active leader of the American Jewish Committee. Additionally, Ruth's diligent work to foster understanding extends to the international sphere as well. She was awarded the Gold Medal of Honor by the Austrian Government and has also been presented with the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit by the German Government for her efforts to build bridges of understanding between the German and Jewish people.

What makes Ruth truly amazing is that despite her countless hours of community service, she has also found the time to raise a family and spend time with her grandchild. I am proud to pay tribute to such an outstanding citizen as Ruth Block.

RECOGNITION OF MICHIGAN WOMEN'S  
HISTORICAL CENTER ON  
ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY**HON. DEBBIE STABENOW**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 17, 1997*

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago the Michigan Women's Studies Association opened the Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame.

During this landmark year, I commend the Michigan Women's Studies Association for their outstanding efforts.